To
The Members of the Leiston-cum-Sizewell Urban District Council.

Gentlemen,

I have the honour, as your Medical Officer of Health, of presenting my report on the general health and sanitary conditions of the District during the year 1908.

PUBLIC HEALTH: The general health of the District has been good. The death rate being lower than usual, and the amount of sickness below the average.

There has been few notifications of infectious disease. Whooping Cough was epidemic in the early months of the year, and caused two deaths.

The birth rate is again too low, the actual figure being the same as last year.

INFECTIOUS DISEASES: There were only three cases notified as against 20 last year, viz:- One Erysipelas, one Typhoid Fever, and one Diphtheria.

The Diphtheria must, I think, have been imported.

With respect to the Typhoid Fever, the relations of an old and faultily constructed pit closet to the drinking water well rendered the contamination of the latter by the former a matter of necessity. It has been proved that a person who has suffered from Typhoid Fever may remain capable of causing the infection of healthy persons for a great number of years.

MORTALITY: The death rate for 1908 is 10.3, for 1907 11.3, and if we deduct from the total number of deaths those of 4 due to accident, that gives a rate, due to disease, of 9.3. The rate of 10.3 is lower than that of any other Urban District in East Suffolk for 1907 except Aldeboro 8.4, and Felixstower 8.9, both of which have a very different class of residents from ours.

The causes of death

1. Infectious Diseases, viz:- Typhoid.
6. Tubercular Diseases or Consumption.

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4. Cancer.
7. Bronchitis and other Diseases of the respiratory system.
2. Whooping Cough.
4. Accidents.
6. Infants under one year.
14. Above the age of 65 years.

Consumption caused six deaths, this is a very constant number. In 1907 there were seven, and in 1905 & 1906 there were six. In my report for last year I said that I thought the time would come when the notification of this disease would be made compulsory. This year the Local Government Board have taken a step in this direction by instructing its Medical Officers under the Poor Law to notify to Medical Officers of Health all cases of Consumption occurring in their Districts. This is not with a view to the compulsory isolation of patients with this disease, as in the case of other compulsorily notifiable infectious diseases, but by advice to prevent as far as possible the spread of the infection. Your Council has already, at my suggestion, had prepared leaflets, setting forth the simple precautions to be taken for this end.

Death rate for 1907: England & Wales 15 - East Suffolk 13.21

do 1908: Leiston 10.3 or corrected 9.3

Infant Mortality. The death rate of Infants under one year is lower, 68.1 as against 127.9 for 1907 - the total number being six, none of which can be actually ascribed to insanitary conditions. No death was ascribed to diarrhoea.

BIRTHS: 88 Births registered as against 86 for 1907. The rate per 1000 being 20.6, precisely the same as for 1907, and much too low.

Rate for England & Wales, and East Suffolk for 1907, 23.44 & 26.3 respectively.

POPULATION: The 1901 Census gave the population of the District as 3251. At the end of 1907 it was 4270.

At the end of 1908 I calculate it to be 4686: in this total I reckon to have included all the Lodgers in the district, of which there are a large number.

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POPULATION (continued): In 1901 there were 4.5 persons to every inhabited house, since when 139 houses have been built and occupied. Taking the 4.5 average as a very reasonable one in a district like ours, this means that accommodation has been provided for 625 persons since 1901, leaving a surplus of 810, or putting the case another way 180 new houses are immediately required on the 4.5 basis. Towards this total thirteen are now in process of erection. Overcrowding is bad both from a public health and moral stand-point.

DRAINAGE: The sewage disposal is carried out by means of a single Septic Tank, the effluent from which flows straight into trenches: from these trenches a system of cross pipes convey the sewage to a large centre pipe which discharges into a stream. The Tank works satisfactorily. The irrigation area has given trouble owing to the cross pipes getting blocked by solid matter which led to the flooding of the lower half of the area. The cross pipes have been taken up and re-laid in shingle which has greatly improved the conditions. The ventilating Shafts for the house drains are generally constructed of galvanized-iron with a mica flap covered by a grating, the idea being that outside air shall be admitted, but the flap shall prevent any exit of sewer gas. The construction of these Shafts is much too flimsy, and they are generally placed so as to be conveniently handy for the children to play with, consequently they are frequently broken and converted into outlets for the sewer gas.

WATER SUPPLY: Derived from the Well situated on Messrs R. Garrett & Sons' Works, whence it is pumped to a distributing tank. The supply is sufficient and the quality good.

I very frequently notice taps allowed to drip, which must lead to a considerable amount of waste during the year.

HOUSE ACCOMMODATION: The class of Houses being built is good.

I should like to see a fireplace or other efficient means of ventilation provided in all bedrooms. There is a demand for houses at a smaller rental than is being provided at present.

The existing accommodation is satisfactory for small families, the

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HOUSE ACCOMMODATION (continued): rooms being of fair size, window space ample, and surrounding air space also sufficient. The Council has not yet adopted bye-laws with respect to building of new houses.

EXCREMENT DISPOSAL: By a system of pails emptied by a Contractor for the Council: the pail is an improvement on the old-fashioned pit, but is not ideal, a thoroughly efficient dry earth system is the best, failing the provision of water closets.

HOUSE REFUSE: Is removed by Contract on behalf of the Council. Iron receptacles are very generally employed, and the system works fairly well, sometimes the collections are not made with sufficient frequency.

BYE-LAWS & NUISANCES: There have been no prosecutions during the year under these bye-laws. There is a great improvement generally on the conditions existing a few years back, viz: in the abolition of pig-styes within the prescribed distance from dwellings, and removal of old heaps of decaying refuse.

SLAUGHTER HOUSES: The five Slaughter Houses have been regularly inspected and found satisfactory.

COW SHEDS & MILK SHOPS: There is still something to be desired in the way of cleanliness in some of the "byres" or milking places. Unless the floor is constructed of cement or other impervious material, and efficiently drained, cleanliness is impossible. I should like to see the regular inspection by qualified men of all milch Cows, with the destruction of all those found tuberculous: this would mean the loss of about one and a quarter million cows.

PHYSICAL FEATURES & GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS OF THE DISTRICT: The district is flat with a marked absence of trees, the few which there are being stunted by east winds which are generally prevalent for most of the year. The soil is poor and of a sandy nature with gravel subsoil, but improves as one gets more away from the sea, where in parts the subsoil is clay.

The general conditions of the population are good. Wages are high and there is no lack of the necessities of life, or even of its luxuries.

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PHYSICAL FEATURES &c (continued): The chief occupations are

(1) that of Mechanics and Labourers on the Ironworks, and

(2) Agriculture.

SCHOOLS: The sanitary conditions of the public elementary Schools are much improved by the provision of water closets with automatic flushing tanks. The Water supply is derived from the Council's Mains.

INFECTIOUS DISEASES: The compulsory notification of infectious diseases is in force in the district, but there is no accommodation for isolating the infected: it is impossible to prevent the spread of infection from one member of a family to another under present conditions.

The Council undertakes the disinfection of houses - the method adopted being the generation of Formalin Vapour.

METHODS OF CONTROL OF TUBERCULOSIS: No system of notification either voluntary or compulsory, but the Council has distributed leaflets explaining the risks of infection and simple means of preventing these risks. Disinfection is always carried out in the event of death whenever possible. There is no hospital accommodation available either for early or advanced cases.

The notification of Births Act has not been adopted.

The Medical Inspection of Children in elementary school is carried out by the East Suffolk County Council, I do not know whether the Inspector's report so far is favourable or otherwise.

I am, Gentlemen,

Yours faithfully,

Herbert McSylvester
M.O.H.

Leiston
1st February 1910.

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FACTORY & WORKSHOPS ACT as it applies to this district.

A. FACTORIES: 1. Messrs Richard Garrett & Sons Ltd., Ironworks.

(a) Safety from fire. The means of escape in case of fire are adequate. A steam fire engine manned by the employees is maintained by the Firm.

(b) Homework. None.

(c) Closet accommodation. sufficient.

2. Messrs Morling & Co., Printers.

This is not a very good building for the purpose, but the cubic space is sufficient, and the closet accommodation satisfactory.

B. DOMESTIC FACTORIES. None.

C. WORKSHOPS: 1. Dressmaking Workshops. No overcrowding, general and sanitary conditions satisfactory. No homework.

2. Bakehouses. There have been no faults found with the bakehouses.

3. Laundries. None.

4. Domestic Workshops. None.

5. Stable Yards. Sanitary accommodation adequate.

D. TENEMENT WORKSHOPS: None.

HOME WORK: There is only one instance of home work employed by Mr Allen Smyth, Upholsterer. Work done: Carpet repairing. Conditions satisfactory.

(Signed)

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